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## **The Least, the Greatest, and the Defiant**

Every once in a while we have people contact us regarding a loved one who has passed away but they didn't walk Torah. The question normally goes like “My mom was a devout Christian, but she died 10 years ago. So because she didn't follow Torah, are you saying that she won't be in heaven?”

With this question in mind, let's read from the book Numbers ...

### **Numbers 15:22-26**

“Now if you unintentionally fail to keep any of these commands the LORD gave Moses — any of the LORD's commands to you through him, from the day the LORD gave them and continuing through the generations to come — and if this is done unintentionally without the community being aware of it, then the whole community is to offer a young bull for a burnt offering as an aroma pleasing to the LORD, along with its prescribed grain offering and drink offering, and a male goat for a sin offering. The priest is to make atonement for the whole Israelite community, and they will be forgiven, for it was not intentional and they have brought to the LORD for their wrong an offering made by fire and a sin offering. The whole Israelite community and the aliens living among them will be forgiven, because all the people were involved in the unintentional wrong.

We see here that if the whole community is not following the law - that being out of ignorance, they are not accountable since they were not disobeying out of defiance. Yet are instructed what to do to begin following in obedience.

However, let's go a little further down ...

### **Numbers 15:29-31**

One and the same law applies to everyone who sins unintentionally, whether he is a native-born Israelite or an alien. “But anyone who sins defiantly, whether native-born or alien, blasphemes the LORD, and that person must be cut off from his people. Because he has despised the LORD's word and broken his commands, that person must surely be cut off; his guilt remains on him.”

So we see a difference between the one who disobeys out of ignorance and the one who disobeys out of defiance.

Thus, anyone who has not followed Torah out of ignorance will not be turned away.

So, in these verses found here in the book of Numbers, we see three distinct categories that man falls into.

Those who pursue in obedience.

Those who pursue in disobedience, that be out of ignorance.

And those who disobey out of defiance.

Compare the words of Yeshua ...

### **Matthew 5:19**

Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

At first glance it seems as if Yeshua is saying that it's OK to not follow the law. You'll just be considered least in the Kingdom. And if you choose to follow it, you'll be greatest in the kingdom.

But is that really what He's saying?

The problem with this is that He then makes a definitive statement that can't be ignored. ....

### **Matthew 5:20**

For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Now we see a condition that if not met, we cannot enter the kingdom. That condition being that our righteousness must surpass that of the Pharisee's righteousness.

The Pharisee's pursued their own righteousness and NOT God's. For a further study on this, please see our teaching titled "The Lawless Pharisees".

So in pursuing their own Law, they rejected God's. It is the rejection of God's law, His eternal Word, that brings judgement.

The Pharisees were more than just familiar with God's Law. They knew it. And they added to it. Then, they placed equal and even greater value to that which they added.

So we see here that Yeshua is actually referencing Numbers 15. The least in the Kingdom being those who disobey out of ignorance. While the greatest being those who obey out of the knowledge of the truth.

And then those of the likes of the Pharisees who reject God's law by pursuing their own.

So if a modern day believer dies without the knowledge of the law, then they truly fall in the first group mentioned in Numbers 15. Where they are not held guilty for disobeying, since there was no knowledge of it.

But if a modern day believer has received the truth of the Word of God, that Yeshua Himself taught, and then refuses to pursue in obedience, it is received as rebellion and defiance. Thus placing them into the group of the defiant as mentioned in Numbers 15.

We don't say this lightly. In fact it concerns us greatly when one is told the truth about the law and then they simply use the teachings and traditions of men to defend their view. In doing this, they ignore God's eternal word.

They are oblivious to the fact that Yeshua is talking to them when He says that their righteousness must surpass that of the Pharisees. The Pharisees were following their own teachings and traditions that were passed down to them. They did this by adding to the law.

Many today do the same as the Pharisee's in following their own teachings and traditions that have been passed down. Yet they do so in taking AWAY from God's law.

With that in mind, please compare the verses that tell us not to add to the law as the Pharisees did ...

**Deuteronomy 4:2** Do not add to what I command you AND do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

And

**Deuteronomy 12:32** See that you do all I command you; do not add to it OR take away from it.

The same verses that gives us the command to not add to God's law, as the Pharisees did, also informs us of the command to not take away from it. As many ministers of today are doing.

Adding to God's law or taking away from it. The common denominator is that of defying God's law to follow man's teachings and traditions. Leaving one with a righteousness that Isaiah calls "filthy rags". (show Isaiah 64:6) For it is only God's righteousness that He desires us to pursue. Not the righteousness of man's teachings and traditions. And His righteousness is given to us in Deuteronomy.

Compare ...

**Deuteronomy 6:25** And if we are careful to obey all this law before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness."

This righteousness is to be pursued in faith.

Compare ...

**Romans 3:22** This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,

And ...

**Romans 10:6-8**

But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into

heaven?” (that is, to bring Christ down) “or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

For a further study on these verses, please see our teachings titled “The Righteous shall live by Faith” AND “The Prayer of Salvation”

God’s commands are given to us to be our righteousness. Yet if we make man’s handed down teachings and traditions our righteousness, then our righteousness is truly as Isaiah said, “Filthy rags”. Making our righteousness no different from that of the Pharisees.

Today, the truth of God’s law is spreading throughout the world. Making the number of those who disobey out of ignorance, as mentioned in Numbers 15, smaller and smaller every day.

In turn, the number of those who obey and rebel ... are growing.

By the time of Yeshua’s return, all men will have heard the truth and will be without excuse. Leaving all men to accept or reject His eternal truth. And so the Scriptures say in Isaiah 1:

**Isaiah 1:18-20**

“Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

We hope you’ve enjoyed this study. Remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom!

For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at [www.testeverything.net](http://www.testeverything.net)

**Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.**

EMAIL: [Info@119ministries.com](mailto:Info@119ministries.com)

FACEBOOK: [www.facebook.com/119Ministries](http://www.facebook.com/119Ministries)

WEBSITE: [www.TestEverthing.net](http://www.TestEverthing.net) & [www.ExaminaloTodo.net](http://www.ExaminaloTodo.net)

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